

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

2010 MBC Annual Meeting Schedule

8:25	Concert of Praise	Praise Team
8:35	Call to Order	Gary Richardson
	Congregational Praise and Worship	Tom Wilson
	Scripture Reading & Prayer	Philip Price
8:55	Organization of the Convention	Gary Richardson
	Committee on Order of Business Report	Ronnie Falvey
	Recognition of Tellers Committee	Gary Richardson
	and Credentials Committee	
	Welcome from FBC, Jackson	Stan Buckley
9:10	Congregational Praise and Worship	Tom Wilson
9:15	Bible Treasures	Frank Page
9:40	Report of Committee on Committees	Buddy Day
9:45	Presentation of Resolutions	
9:50	Election of the President	Rickey Blythe
10:10	Congregational Praise and Worship	Tom Wilson
10:15	Convention Board Report	J. Steve Jackson
10:25	Congregational Praise and Worship	Tom Wilson
10:35	Christian Action Commission Report	Jimmy Porter
10:45	Introduction of the President	Jim Futral
10:50	Concert of Praise	Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra
11:00	President's Address	Gary Richardson
11:35	Benediction	Cissa Richardson

1:30	Concert of Praise	Mississippi Singing Churchmen
1:45	Call to Order	Rickey Blythe
	Congregational Praise and Worship.....	Daniel Williamson
	Scripture Reading & Prayer	Jim Burke
2:00	Bible Treasures	Frank Page
2:25	Concert of Praise	Mississippi Singing Churchmen
2:35	Business Session	Gary Richardson
	Presentation of 2011 Budget	Weldon Aultman
	Results of Election of President	
	Election of Convention Officers	
	Presentation of Resolutions	
	Miscellaneous Business	
3:00	Missions Mobilization	Ken Rhodes
3:15	Music Feature.....	Praise Ensemble
3:20	Business Session	Gary Richardson
	Election of Convention Officers	
	Miscellaneous Business	
3:35	Congregational Praise and Worship.....	Daniel Williamson
3:40	Choral Praise	Praise Ensemble
3:50	Convention Sermon	Jeff Clark
4:25	Benediction	Frank Gunn

6:30	Music Feature	Mississippi Baptist Convention Orchestra
6:40	Call to Order	Gary Richardson
	Final Presentation of Resolutions	
	Congregational Praise and Worship	Larry Black
	Scripture Reading and Prayer	Dan Robertson
6:55	Choral Praise	Metro-Jackson Combined Choirs
		Mississippi Baptist Convention Orchestra

Hotel/motel rates are effective October 25-27, in conjunction with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. When making reservations, be sure to ask for the Mississippi Baptist Convention rate.

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- Best Western Executive Inn, 725 Larson St. (I-55 High St., Exit 96-B). \$79.99 single/double per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast. (601) 969-6555.
- Cabot Lodge Millsaps, 2375 North State St. \$89 single/double per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast. (601) 948-8650.

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- Cabot Lodge Millsaps, 2375 North State St. \$89 single/double per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast. (601) 948-8650.

• Edison Walthall, 225 E. Capitol St. (I-55
Pearl St, Exit 96-A). \$90 single/double per
night plus tax. (601) 948-6161

• Hampton Inn, 320 Greymont Ave, (I-55 High St. Exit 96-B). \$94 single/double per night plus tax. (601) 352-1700.

• Holiday Inn Express, 310 Greymont Ave, (I-55 High St, Exit 96-B). \$79 single/double per night plus tax. (601) 948-1456.

• **Regency Hotel**, 400 Greymont Ave, (I-55 High St, Exit 96-B) \$59 single/double per night plus tax, (601) 969-2141.

• Cabot Lodge Jackson North, 120
Dyess Rd, Ridgeland. \$89 single/double
per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast.
(662) 957-0757

• **Comfort Inn**, 145 Soldier Colony Rd, Canton. \$62.99 single/double per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast.

• Holiday Inn Express 5569 I-55

• Holiday Inn Express, 5567 1-35 South, Byram. \$89 single/double per night plus tax. Hot/cold breakfast. (601) 346-8118.

High court hears appeal in Westboro case

WASHINGTON (BP) — While an overwhelming number of Americans are disturbed with the message the Westboro Baptist Church promotes, many fear rights protected by the First Amendment could be jeopardized if the U.S. Supreme Court does not rule in the church's favor.

The high court heard oral arguments on Oct. 6 in the controversial case involving protests at military funerals. Albert Snyder, father of deceased Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder, filed suit against Fred Phelps and his Topeka, Kan., independent church, saying a protest by the group outside his son's funeral in 2006 caused him extensive emotional anguish and invaded his family's right to privacy.

The church is not affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention or any other denomination.

"I don't know what the rules ought to be there," Associate Justice Stephen Breyer said during the arguments, referring to the right of an individual to put anything online or on television even when the material "attacks... the most private things of a private individual."

Phelps and his congregation are known nationwide for their inflammatory demonstrations, often outside the funerals of U.S. armed services members who were killed in Iraq or Afghanistan. The church protests with brightly colored signs and T-shirts reading, for example: "God hates fags," "God hates America," and "Thank God for dead soldiers."

Many states have passed time, place, and manner laws

that put restrictions on protesters. For example, Colorado law says protesters outside abortion facilities must maintain an eight-foot distance from those entering or exiting the premises.

Since the Kansas church frequently holds demonstrations at times and places that fall under such restrictions, the congregation — which consists primarily of Phelps family members — must be careful to strictly adhere to the law. To date, the members of the church have not been in violation of such regulations.

Snyder, however, is suing the family on counts of violation of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress. A Maryland court originally ruled in favor of Snyder, awarding him \$10.9 million but later reducing the amount to \$5 million. However, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals later ruled in favor of Phelps, saying the speech was protected by the First Amendment.

Sean Summers, the attorney representing Snyder, told justices there was no relevant Supreme Court precedent that included invasion of privacy and targeted hate speech at a private person as rights protected by the First Amendment. He argued in court the signs the church protested with that day, including ones reading "You're going to hell" and "Thank God for dead soldiers," were specifically referring to Matthew Snyder.

Summers cited an epic poem, written by Westboro members and later posted on the church website, that specifically referred to Snyder and his parents. Associate Justice Samuel Alito seemed to agree, saying,



IN COURT — In this file photo, Fred Phelps, pastor of Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., and a native of Meridian, prepares to participate in one of his church's trademark protests that have drawn condemnation for years from civic and religious leaders around the country. The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments last week in an appeal of a judgment against the church for their manner of protesting at the funeral of a soldier killed in Iraq. Westboro Baptist Church, which consists mainly of Phelps family members, is not affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo)

"If you read the epic, perhaps that sheds light on who 'you' is."

Summers made the case this was a private ceremony and that Westboro invaded this right to privacy. Furthermore, Summers said the Phelps specifically targeted the Snyder family and personally harassed its members, an act he said shouldn't be protected by free speech.

"I would hope that the First Amendment wasn't enacted to allow people to disrupt and harass people at someone else's private funeral," Summers said.

However, some of the justices seemed to struggle to accept that the Snyder family, rather than society in general, was the target of the church's attacks.

Margie Phelps, daughter of Fred Phelps and attorney for her family, tried to play up this dissension, claiming the church was simply using the ceremony to incite public debate on a national issue — the war in Iraq. She also argued the church was responding to a message Snyder brought to the public debate himself by submitting a statement to his local newspaper questioning the war following his son's death.

The church, therefore, was not invading the family's privacy by responding to his questioning. "The words that were at issue in this case were people from a church delivering a religious viewpoint, commenting not only on the broader public issues that the discussion was underway in this nation about dying soldiers, about the morals of the nation," Phelps said.

The justices questioned Phelps on whether Albert or Matthew Snyder were considered public or private figures and whether or not the First Amendment provided the church the right to enter public discourse with such outrageous claims about a private individual and family.

Some of the justices alleged the church was using the ceremony to maximize the publicity of its message. "The question is: Why should the First Amendment tolerate exploiting this Marine's family when you have so many other forums for... getting across your message?" Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg asked.

MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Clinics closing

WASHINGTON (BP) — Abortion clinics in two states have closed, according to media reports. Planned Parenthood of Southern New Jersey has shut down its Cherry Hill family planning clinic in a dispute over state funding, while a Maryland abortion clinic is closing after its operator's medical license was suspended. In New Jersey, Democrats in the state Senate failed to override Gov. Chris Christie's veto of a bill that would have restored \$7.5 million to family planning clinics, according to the Associated Press. In Maryland, staff members at Gynecare Center in Severna Park acknowledged Sept. 23 that the facility was shutting down, according to LifeSiteNews.com. Pro-life advocates said they are uncertain if the clinic is permanently closed or if it will reopen if its embattled operator, Romeo Ferrer, 69, finds another doctor to perform abortions. The Maryland Board of Physicians suspended Ferrer's medical license Sept. 8 as a result of his failure to care properly for a 21-year-old woman who died after he performed an abortion on her in 2006. She was 16 weeks pregnant. The board found that Ferrer gave her too much anesthesia and failed to monitor her condition according to his own policy. Abortion doctor George Shepard Jr., 88, also lost his medical license — in a second state. The Delaware Board of Medical Licensure and Discipline suspended the license of George Shepard Jr., on Oct. 1, according to The Wilmington (Del.) News Journal. The Maryland Board of Physicians had suspended Shepard's license in its state, it was reported Sept. 3. The Maryland board charged Shepard with unprofessional conduct and with aiding abortion clinic operator Steve Brigham in defying credentialing mandates. Shepard serves as part-time medical director of Brigham's Maryland clinics. Delaware officials began investigating Shepard after Maryland took action. The News Journal reported.

Looking back

10 years ago

Crestwood Church, Franklin, Ky., erects a Ten Commandments monument on their church property, partially in response to the ACLU blocking the erection of a similar monument on the grounds of the state capitol.

20 years ago

First Church, Brookhaven, sends 34 members on mission to Nariz, Mexico, for a week of building houses, completing a medical clinic, and installing recreational equipment at a local church. The team's four-person cooking crew prepares three meals a day without electricity or running water.

30 years ago

Mississippi Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts through September totaled \$2,081,678.92, leaving \$418,321.08 to be given in October to meet the years' objective of \$2,500,000.



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Last week this space included a fervent plea for Christians to vote on November 2. It is not only our right as Christians to vote in the democratic Republic our Founding Fathers organized so well for us, it is our responsibility. If Christians expect to be taken seriously, we have to vote. Politicians understand the power of the ballot box.

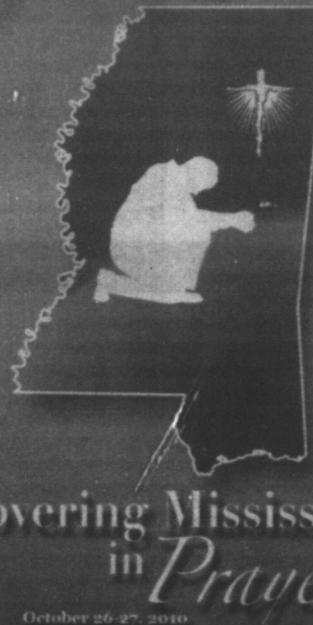
If voting is an important aspect of our civic duty, attending the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention is an important aspect of our spiritual duty. The convention, which will meet on October 26 and 27 at First Church, Jackson, has since 1824 served as a blessing from God for the furtherance of Kingdom work and obedience to our Lord's Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Mississippi Baptist Convention is a critical link in the Great Commission chain that stretches from each of us in the pews to

the people serving on the most remote mission fields on earth — and that's no exaggeration. From this incredible chain has grown the greatest missionary-sending enterprise in the history of the Protestantism — and that's no exaggeration, either.

The Cooperative Program is the unified giving plan that sprang from unified Baptists to support our manifold and far-flung ministries. The people in the pews give to their local church, which retains a percentage of the funds for their local missions activities and sends the remainder to their state Baptist convention (in our case, the Mississippi Baptist Convention).

175th Mississippi Baptist Convention



Covering Mississippi in Prayer

October 26-27, 2010
First Baptist Church, Jackson

be sent on to the next level. The local church determines how much will be sent to the state Baptist conventions, and the state Baptist conventions determine how much will be sent to the Southern Baptist Convention.

That's where you come in. It is important that members be involved in the decisions that are made at the local church level — and not all of those important decisions involve finances. It is equally important that the members of churches affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention be involved on the state convention level, as crucial decisions of all types are also made there.

Messengers are chosen to represent their local churches in voting matters of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, as presented at the annual meeting. To find out how to represent your church at the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, contact your church office.

If your church office isn't sure how to do that, ask them to contact the office of the executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at (601) 292-3201 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 201. E-mail: bbox@mbcb.org.

The annual meeting is not all business. You don't even have to be designated as a messenger to attend the annual meeting. It's open to anyone who wants to join together to worship the Lord and praise His greatness — and there's plenty of time and plenty of ways set aside on the schedule to do just that.

Like our secular government, our denominational polity is centered around self-governance. Both systems work because the people get involved. One is our civic duty; the other is our spiritual duty. May we not fail in our commitment to either.

The state Baptist conventions receive those funds and retain a portion for state missions activities. The remainder is sent by the state Baptist conventions to the Southern Baptist Convention, which uses its portion of the gifts from the people in the pews to fund its missions activities.

All along the Cooperative Program pipeline, each entity determines the portion of church-goers' gifts that will be retained at that level and how much will

Church members are decorating with shades of orange and brown and meeting to finalize plans for fall festivals. It is important to plan for the event but it is just as important to plan for follow-up. The ABCs of special evangelistic events is a good way to gauge your planning:

• A is to draw attention to your event. One way of doing this is through signs and flyers you place throughout town. Some churches use signs placed in church members' yards to advertise. Other churches place flyers in businesses. The church may decide to deliver or to mail handouts to their neighborhoods.

Make sure you utilize your decorations to draw attention to your event. For instance, a tent or a large, temporary sign causes passersby to become curious about what you are doing. Place these where they are most visible.

• B stands for bridge building. How are you going to connect with your guests as they attend your event? The greatest benefit to holding fall festivals is the ability to create a large prospect list by registering all your guests. How can you do this? Make registering a neces-

GUEST OPINION:



Make fall festival the best it can be

By Keith Manuel
Alexandria, La.

sity to participate. All guests need an armband to participate in your games or all guests must receive a ticket to exchange for food.

When registering guests, don't forget to ask for their email addresses. That way you can send out a mass thank-you for attending your event and for future communication to let them know about other events. The obvious thing to do is to spend time getting to know the families who attend your event. A team of greeters who are easily identifiable is vital to being the best host you can be.

• C stands for communicate the Gospel. There are various ways to share the Gospel depending on your type of event. One way to

share the message is through tracts designed for the theme of your event. Your local LifeWay store can show you various options concerning tracts for your event. Another way is through sharing testimonies or a creative form of evangelism such as an illusionist, artist or ventriloquist.

The Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (COSBE) has a list of evangelists who would love to help with your event. Please remember this is how these men and women make their living and they should be compensated appropriately.

Your planning for the event after the event is just as important as the event itself. Follow-up is sometimes the

weakest area of planning. You should provide training for a team of church members whose assignment is to organize multiple ways to express your thanks to those who attended your event. The team can organize a prayer ministry to discover prayer needs of your guests. This creates an ongoing ministry that may give you the opportunity to share the Gospel.

The team can establish groups to deliver a gift from your church or to provide an invitation to or information about your church. Be creative in your approach but also be quick. Don't let the names of prospects sit around and get lost in a stack of papers never to receive follow-up.

Do fall festivals work? Yes! However, by working smart, you connect with a few families who are looking for a church home and provide opportunities for your guests to hear the Gospel.

Keith Manuel, former pastor of Beacon Church in Hattiesburg, is an evangelism associate on the Louisiana Baptist Convention's evangelism & church growth team. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

Christians may sue over arrests at local Arab festival

DEARBORN, Mich. (BP) — A civil lawsuit may be filed against the city of Dearborn, Mich., on behalf of four people — including two Southern Baptists — who were arrested on charges of breaching the peace at an Arab festival in Dearborn.

The four were later acquitted of those charges. Attorney Robert Muise of the Thomas More Law Center in Ann Arbor, Mich., said the arrest and detainment of four self-described Christian missionaries on June 18 at Dearborn's annual International Arab Festival were a clear infringement of their First and Fourth Amendment rights, and a violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment under the U.S. Constitution.

A Dearborn jury on Sept. 24 acquitted all four defendants — Nabeel Qureshi, David Wood, Negeen Mayel, and Paul Rezkalla — on the breach of peace charges. Mayel was convicted of an additional charge of failure to obey a police officer. Muise said that ruling would be appealed and the conviction likely overturned.

The charges arose out of an incident at the festival this past June, in which he and a group of young men were discussing the claims of Christianity. The four were working with a ministry founded by Qureshi and Wood, a former atheist, called Acts 17 Apologetics. They were videotaping the dialogue when Dearborn police arrested Qureshi.

Muise said Dearborn authorities established overbearing regulations for the festival that stifle free speech, especially the Christian witness. Dearborn, a Detroit sub-

urb, is believed to be home to the second largest Arab population outside the Middle East.

Dearborn Mayor Jack O'Reilly Jr. hired the city's first Arab American police chief, Ronald Haddad, in 2008.

Muise said Haddad, with the sergeant in charge of security and a community liaison for the festival, developed the highly restrictive criteria for the festival, even creating a buffer zone that reached as far as five blocks from the festival entrance.

Even the sidewalks were no longer considered public domain by festival guidelines.

The new guidelines stymied the dissemination of Christian material in or near the festival, Muise maintains. Organizers argue that all festival participants are allowed to work from a booth within the festival, and five Christian organizations chose to do so but the defendants chose not to.

As in years past, the festival included other Christian groups who were granted booths at the event, including Josh McDowell's ministry. None reported problems with police, but those ministries apparently did not venture outside their booths to evangelize.

The Acts 17 group had no such booth, but they say their right to free speech in a public place was violated by their arrest and detainment.

Qureshi and Wood are familiar with the festival and its regulations. They were among four people last year — including Mary Jo Sharp, a member of Nassau Bay Church in suburban Houston and a frequent apologetics

speaker — who were escorted out of the festival by police after Qureshi tried to engage a booth attendant in a videotaped dialogue about Islam.

Mayel told the Texan, the news journal of the Southern Baptists of Texas convention, in an e-mail: "The prosecutor painted us out to be racist against Muslims when the truth is two of us are ex-Muslims and we would have never gone to the Arab Festival had it not been for our deep love for Muslims."

Videotape of the June 18 incident reveals a series of rapid-fire questions for Qureshi from eight to 10 young men at the festival. Qureshi took questions from the inquisitive group, including one about when Jesus was first considered God. Qureshi is heard telling the young men that Jesus has changed his life and that God loved them enough to send his son to die for them.

The tone of the conversation is tense but not threatening, contrary to the testimony of one of the arresting officers. Finally, the camera turns toward a Dearborn police officer who approaches Qureshi from behind and asks him to place his hands behind his back.

At this point Wood, Qureshi, and Rezkalla were arrested and charged with breach of peace. Mayel, who had been videotaping the encounter from a distance, was arrested prior to her cohorts. Muise said the arresting officer reported Qureshi had drawn "a riotous crowd of 50-60 people and was shouting."

"They didn't like the video and the video exonerated [my clients]," he said.



Muise said the fact that witnessing for Christ to Muslims in America is a criminal offense is disturbing. One of the first protective measures of First Amendment rights, Muise said, is the defense against "The heckler's veto." A speaker cannot be silenced by authorities for fear of how the audience will react to his words, Muise said.

In an open letter posted on the City of Dearborn website, the mayor said Acts 17 Apologetics came with the intention of being arrested in order to "inflame the passions of viewers who would be taken in by their misrepresentation of what was really going on."

"People who would promote hatred and lies to get others to act in ways that are contrary to what America stands for are the real enemy for all lovers of our country," O'Reilly continued.

"History is full of horrific events that were manufactured by lies to get good people to act purely emotionally to achieve the deceivers' ends."

O'Reilly also accused the group in a Detroit Free Press article of using the event as a tactic to raise money for their ministry.

Muise said he is looking at all documentation to build his case for a civil suit against the city of Dearborn.

"The bottom line in the jury's not guilty verdict, the Constitution, not Sharia law, still prevails in Dearborn, Michigan," wrote Richard Thompson, the Thomas More Law Center's president and chief counsel.

Editor's note: The video in question may be viewed at www.thomasmore.org/default_sb_thomasmore.html?7613/6103.

New stem cell method eliminates need to destroy human embryos

WASHINGTON (BP) — Pro-life bioethicists have applauded the announcement of a new advance in stem cell research that is a safer and more efficient method than previously discovered methods and avoids experiments that destroy human embryos.

Scientists at the Harvard Stem Cell Institute in Boston, Mass., published studies showing they had reprogrammed adult skin cells into induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells without the hazards previously associated with the technique. Unlike previous conversions of adult cells into stem cells virtually identical to those in embryos, these iPS cells did not require the use of viruses to insert genes into cells — a technique which increases the risk of cancer in the recipient of the cells.

The new method also avoided the ethical problems of embryonic stem cell research (ESCR), which requires the destruction of days-old human embryos when extracting the cells.

ESCR opponents said the development further demonstrates the destructive research method — which is funded by the federal government — is not only morally repugnant but unnecessary.

"This is yet another confirmation that when science takes the moral high ground great discoveries can be made," said C. Ben Mitchell, professor of moral philosophy at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and a consultant to the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville.

"Even some of the most skeptical proponents of embryo-destructive research are getting the message," Mitchell told Baptist Press. "There are no good reasons to kill human embryos for research. Human embryos belong in a mother's body, not in a research lab."

Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, told The Washington Post, "With each new study it becomes more and more implausible to claim that scientists must rely on destruction of human embryos to achieve rapid progress in regenerative medicine."

David Stevens, the Christian Medical Association's chief executive officer, said the new research "should put one of the final nails in the coffin of federally funded embryonic stem cell research. This breakthrough is further evidence that the

government's illegal funding of embryo-destroying research is like investing in vinyl record technology in a digital age."

ESCR advocates, however, continued to call for government funds for destructive research using embryonic cells. Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), commended the new study as "a substantial advance" but said the new iPS research must be compared to ESCR.

"To explore these important potential differences, iPS research must continue to be conducted side by side with human embryonic cell research," he told The Post.

The discovery was announced as a battle over government funding of ESCR is being fought in the federal judiciary. Two days before the Harvard researchers issued their Sept. 30 report, the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals ruled federal funding of ESCR may continue while a legal challenge is considered.

D.C. federal judge Royce Lamberth had halted the grants Aug. 23 because a lawsuit against NIH guidelines on ESCR had "a strong likelihood" of succeeding. On Sept. 7, Lamberth rejected the Obama administration's request that he revoke his stay. The administration

then took its case to the appeals court.

In his injunction stopping funding of ESCR, Lamberth found NIH's 2009 guidelines violated a 1996 law that prohibits federal funds for research in which a human embryo is destroyed. NIH's rules allow funding for research on stem cells derived from embryos created by *in vitro* fertilization but not implanted. The embryos have to be donated by the parents who underwent the fertility treatments.

NIH published the guidance after President Obama issued an executive order earlier in 2009 overturning a more restrictive funding policy and ordering the institute to draft guidelines consistent with his decree. Obama's executive order overturned a prohibition instituted by President Bush on federal funding of stem cell research that results in the destruction of embryos.

Bush's 2001 order did permit grants for experiments on stem cell lines, or colonies, already in existence at the time of his action.

The ability of stem cells to convert to other cells and tissues has provided great hope for developing cures for various diseases.

GHC AUBV, ODX BCODX

HYND CSM WVVC: WNA

U SOIV OYYVOAVX

HDCN CSVV WNA CSUB

YHAYNBV, CN QOPV

CSVV O QUDUBCVA ODX

O JUCDVBB GNCS NW

CSNBV CSUDLB JSUES

CSNH SOBC BVVD, ODX

NW CSNBV CSUDLB UD

CSV JSUES U JURR

OYYVOA HDCN CSVV.

OECB CJVDCM-BUK:

BUKCVVD

Clue: Y = P

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Fourteen: Sixty-four

A WORLD OF BLAME

From the very beginning — in the first family of human beings living in the Garden of Eden — there has been a tendency to blame other people for our actions. When Adam took of the fruit of the one tree in the garden that he was supposed to leave alone, God confronted him and in essence, he said, "It is not my fault. The woman thou gavest me..." and he blamed his wife. The woman, recognizing what was happening, said, "It is not my fault. The snake came and tempted me." As has often been pointed out, the snake did not have a leg to stand on.

Blame, blame, blame — but who is responsible for our decisions? Ultimately, every one of us must face the reality that we are responsible for our own decisions and the consequences of those decisions. You may not have had perfect parents and the church in your community may have had hypocrites who attended. The teachers in your school may not have been the most highly qualified in the nation and your coach may not have been a world-class athlete. Still, what you do, the decisions you make, and the achievements or failures you experience, will ultimately and basically be yours. You will have to own them.

Recently, a friend of mine was telling me that there are three things in your life that you will have to recognize. Regardless of what any one else says or does, you are responsible for these.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

1. Your own retirement —

No one is going to accept the responsibility of thinking about, planning for, sacrificing, and saving for your retirement. If you make adequate preparations for your retirement, probably no one will know, care, or comment. If you do not make plans, in time there will be plenty of people who will gather around, point out the error of your ways, and criticize you for not making adequate preparation. You are the only person in the driver's seat. The man of wisdom in the book of Proverbs noticed how the little, insignificant, weak ant works so hard in the summer and makes plans and preparations for the cold days that are ahead. Surely most of us are as smart as an ant, but if we do not plan and implement we may come to the latter days of life, sit in the deep waters of blame, and be critical of the government, the folks for whom you worked, or even your family.

2. The second thing for which you and you alone are responsible is your health. I mean by that, nobody is going to take care of you and nobody is going to make you take care of yourself. Many of us eat too much, but not once have I

ever seen somebody hold a gun to somebody's head and say, "You are going to eat this or I'm going to pull the trigger." Many of us exercise too little, but I have never seen anyone threatened or forced to just sit, not move, and not exercise. Many of us do not go to the doctor and have checkups regularly or if we feel bad, we may not go to have some illness checked out. That is a singular decision that rests with no one else but you. There is something significant about the Christian recognizing that his or her body is the temple of God. While the Old Testament temple in Jerusalem was beautiful, even more so it was functional. Of course, it needed to be taken care of and so must the temple in which the Spirit of God resides today. Give attention to the things that are important in order for your temple to be presented in its best light and function to its maximum capability. While others may hound you and comment to you about what

you need to do or not do, weight you need to gain or lose, or health issues you need to address, my friend you are the only one who can make those decisions.

3. The third and most important area in which no one else can make the decisions for you has to do with your daily walk with the Lord. Just as no one can be saved for you and you must put your faith in Jesus, no one is in a position to force discipline on you to walk with Jesus, to obey Him, and to grow in your faith. It cannot happen without self-discipline. The amount of discipline you exert to grow in faith; to expand your horizons and your vision to follow the Lord; to be strengthened in your prayer life; or to exercise stewardship in the use of your resources is totally up to you. Now, others may observe there are some things lacking in your walk with the Lord, but they are certainly not in a position to command you to do anything about it. It is up to you.

Today, become God's manager in charge. You make those decisions that will affect your future in the distance, your health right now, and your spiritual wholeness day after day.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

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REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. **Green's Creek Church, Petal:** 160th anniversary Oct. 24, 10 a.m., followed by pot luck luncheon; old fashioned day theme; Jackie Spell, speaker; Mike Routon, pastor.
2. **Bogue Chitto Church, Bogue Chitto:** 125th anniversary, Nov. 14; registration, 10 a.m.; service, 10:30 a.m., including pictorial history presentation, and potluck lunch.
3. **Liberty Church, Newton County:** Homecoming and 110th anniversary, Oct. 24; service, 10 a.m., followed by food and fellowship.
4. **Victory Church, Mathiston:** Revival and 19th anniversary, Oct. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m., followed by noon meal and singing; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Jack Hollingsworth, speaker.
5. **Ackerman Church, Ackerman:** Revival, Oct. 17 - 20; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Mickey Dalrymple, speaker; Ed Brashier, music; Danny Irvin, pastor.
6. **Galilee Church, Rockport:** Homecoming, Oct. 24; services, 10 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch and Eternity Trio, 1:30 p.m.
7. **Nola Church, Lawrence County:** Homecoming, Oct. 17; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Chris Shepard, speaker; Mickey Sandifer, music.
8. **First Church, Oloh:** Homecoming, Oct. 17; Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds; Wallace Whatley, speaker; Mark King, music.
9. **Beulah Church, Newton County:** Revival, Oct. 17 - 20; Sun., 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 6:45 a.m.; Wayne Hudson, speaker; Gary Dover, music; Keith Ramage, pastor.
10. **Improve Church, Columbia:** Homecoming, Oct. 3, with a fellowship meal and gospel sing; C.M. Brewer, speaker; Reuben McDowell, music.
11. **First Church, Rose Hill:** Homecoming, Oct. 24; fellowship meal and afternoon singing with Bluff City Quartet; revival, Oct. 25 - 27; Keith Ulmer, speaker; Eddie Martin, pastor.
12. **Chunky Church, Chunky:** Homecoming and revival, Oct. 17 - 21; Sun., services followed by lunch; Robert Rowzee, speaker; Mon. - Thurs., 7 p.m.; Mark Vincent, Dennis Duvall, Steven Holifield, and Johnny Collins, speakers; Wayne Campbell, pastor.
13. **Candler's Chapel, Prentiss Association:** Revival, Oct. 31 - Nov. 3; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Rex Yancey, speaker; Greg Smart, pastor.
14. **First Church, Stonewall:** Revival, Oct. 17 - 20; Sun., 10:50 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Luther Price, speaker; Daniel Carmack, music.
15. **North Winona Church, Winona:** 50th anniversary, Oct. 24; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and fellowship; Rusty Fair, pastor.
16. **Mt. Vernon Church, Newton:** Homecoming, Oct. 17; worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch and cemetery meeting; church will be decorated in old home style; Gerald Hodges, speaker; Steve Pouncey, pastor.
17. **Blythe Creek Church, Choctaw Association:** Homecoming, Oct. 17; singing, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Archie England, speaker; Mike Fondren, pastor.
18. **Ethel Church, Ethel:** Homecoming, Oct. 17; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; Keith Dowden, speaker.
19. **Arkabulka Church, Arkabulka:** Homecoming, Oct. 17, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner; Chip Gresham, speaker; Ernie Lentz, music.

Making films of 'love, honor, courage, compassion'

LOS ANGELES (BP) — Most moviegoers would struggle to connect Southern Baptist church life with a major theatrical release — but in the case of Randall Wallace, the time he spent in SBC churches in his youth is directly related to his current success.

"I grew up a Southern Baptist and in tent revivals," said Wallace, director of the film *Secretariat*, which opened in theaters nationwide on Oct. 8. "I was in church a lot of hours a week. I once calculated there were many weeks I was in church 20 hours a week."

A native of Jackson, Tenn., Wallace started attending church services, Sunday School, Training Union, and Wednesday night prayer meetings at Cherokee Church in Memphis. He also attended Pine Grove Church near Lexington, Tenn., a church founded in his grandmother's farmhouse.

After his family moved to Virginia, Wallace was baptized at Rivermont Avenue Church in Lynchburg.

"I'm not sorry a bit I've got that background," said Wallace, screenwriter for 1995's Academy Award-winning movie *Braveheart*. "I think that was a wonderful background and I don't think I would be me without it."

From Wallace's standpoint, faith also plays a crucial role in



Wallace

his new film, the story of the 1973 Triple Crown winner. Three horses claimed the crown during the 1970s, but Secretariat was the first in 25 years. Affirmed was the last to capture the title in 1978.

In addition to chronicling Secretariat's ascendancy, the movie tells the story of the obstacles facing his owner Penny Chenery, who took over her ailing father's Meadow Stables in Virginia.

"I think the most important element of the movie is a celebration of love and faith," said Wallace, who majored in religion in college and attended seminary at Duke University. "My strategy as a director and a writer, or storyteller, is to celebrate the best. I want to see and celebrate the victory in the human spirit when we believe in something greater than ourselves, and we believe there are possibilities that even we cannot imagine. That's what makes *Secretariat* special."

While the film delves into Chenery's challenges after she entered a male-dominated sport, Wallace sees parallels in his own life. After leaving school, he moved to Nashville in an attempt to become a songwriter and performer. When that didn't pan out, he moved to Los Angeles in 1980. There he continued songwriting and also became a novelist, with one of his books making The New York Times bestseller list.

Still, 15 years would pass before his first screenplay became an Academy Award winner. Wallace admits to fighting many doubts during that time.

"The struggle for me in those days was [asking], 'Is this desire of mine to write when no one else is encouraging me to do this — is this selfishness on my part?'" Wallace recalled. "One thing I was thinking was, 'Am I wasting my efforts or am I actually answering God's call?'

"I love the internal questions of the woman who owned Secretariat. I could relate to her desire to go into business and to run the business she had inherited from her father and to do that in her own way."

That desire partially took her away from her family, which Wallace said was similar to his desire to write music. After Nashville, his next career move took him away from familiar surroundings geographically and from extended family.

"I had to come to California where I didn't know anyone," Wallace said, adding that when he arrived in Los Angeles he had no ambition to be in the movie business.

After his music career still didn't take off, he met some actors who complained about the quality of scripts. After examining some screenplays, Wallace decided he liked this form of storytelling because it felt natural to him.

His success with *Braveheart* paved the way for his directing debut in 1998 with *The Man in the Iron Mask*. A year later,



'NOT SORRY' — Randall Wallace (right) talks with Otto Thorwarth, who plays jockey Ron Turcotte in *Secretariat*, a major theatrical release. Wallace, the movie's director, readily declares he's "not sorry a bit" for his Southern Baptist upbringing. (BP photo courtesy of Wheelhouse Entertainment)

Wallace founded Wheelhouse Entertainment, a company aimed at creating entertainment based on values of love, honor, courage, and compassion.

Wheelhouse has produced several movies, books — including *The New York Times* bestseller, *Pearl Harbor* — and music CDs, and will soon release its first video game.

Ironically, the PG-rated *Secretariat* is the first movie Wallace has made that he feels comfortable recommending for the whole family. His last film, *We Were Soldiers*, dramatized the U.S. Army's first major battle in the Vietnam

War. It was rated R, partially for its graphic war violence.

Wallace said he didn't want to lie about the horrors of war, but now he is pleased that grandparents and grandchildren can enjoy *Secretariat* together.

"A man who is in the Army can see this sitting next to a Sunday School teacher and both of them would love the movie with equal passion," Wallace said. "There aren't many movies out there that every member of the family can enjoy. There are movies that the whole family could see together, but they would not all love fervently."

Canadian judge strikes country's prostitution, sex trade laws

OTTAWA (BP) — A Canadian court decision overturning the nation's anti-prostitution laws will lead to an increase in human trafficking and violence against women if it stands, Christians in the country and other like-minded groups warn.

A lower court judge struck down the anti-prostitution and anti-sex workers laws on Sept. 28, ruling that the laws — instead of protecting prostitutes — actually contribute to the "danger faced by prostitutes." The ruling could be appealed.

"I find that the danger faced by prostitutes greatly outweighs any harm which may be faced by other members of the public," wrote Justice Susan Himmel of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.

In her 132-page ruling, Himmel said the laws violated the country's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canada's version of the Bill of Rights.

Legalizing prostitution, Himmel said, would allow prostitutes and brothel houses to hire managers, drivers, and security personnel as well as to screen potential clients by conducting background checks.

Canadian Attorney General Rob Nicholson released a statement saying the government is "seriously considering an appeal" and that it will fight to ensure the law addresses the "significant harms that flow from prostitution to both communities and the prostitutes themselves."

Gerry Taillon, national ministry leader for the Canadian National Baptist Convention, also expressed concern. "This decision has adverse ramifications for Canadian society and opens the door for increased abuse of women and an expanding of the horrific practice of human trafficking," Taillon told Baptist Press.

"We appeal to our government to oppose this with reasonable legislation in coherence with accepted standards of decency and the respect for persons," he said.

Opponents of prostitution fear the country will go the way of European countries such as the Netherlands, which saw a dramatic increase in the demand for prostitutes once the practice was legalized. The Netherlands sex

trade takes in an estimated one billion dollars each year.

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, which is urging the government to appeal the ruling, released a report in April pointing to research showing prostitution "has historically signified" an increase in the number of "women and children being trafficked into the commercial sex trade."

"One year after the legalization of brothels came into effect in the Netherlands, eight Dutch victim support organizations reported an influx of the number of trafficking victims," the report said. "Not only did human trafficking rates increase significantly, but the legalization of brothels also brought with it an increase in child prostitution."

ChildRight, an Amsterdam-based organization, estimated that child prostitution rates skyrocketed, nearly quadrupling between 1996 and 2001.

The report also rejected the argument that prostitution is a voluntary career choice that must be respected. "Numerous studies show that the majority of women in the sex trade did

not in fact make a fully consenting, rational choice to enter the trade," the report said.

"Real choices, such as careers in medicine, law, nursing or politics were not available. Rather, faced with harsh realities, their choices were heavily guided by questions of survival, such as how to feed themselves and their children. These 'choices' weren't really choices at all, but more so, means and strategies of survival," the report pointed out.

The case is *Bedford v. Canada*, and the case's namesake — 50-year-old prostitute Terri Jean Bedford — herself has a history of abuse as a teen.

"She had a difficult childhood, and was subjected to physical, psychological, and sexual abuse," Himmel acknowledged in her ruling. "At the age of 16, she was sent to a boarding house in Windsor, Ontario by the Children's Aid Society.

Shortly thereafter, she met an abusive 37-year-old drug dealer and drug addict who became her live-in boyfriend.

"He introduced her to drugs and she became addicted. Ms.

Bedford says that she began prostituting as a 'necessary evil' to fund her and her boyfriend's addictions."

Nevertheless, Bedford celebrated the ruling and called it "emancipation day for sex trade workers."

Patricia Paddey, a writer and TV producer, asserted that legalizing prostitution would dehumanize the women and "reinforce the idea that human beings can be counted in dollars and cents, when in God's eyes we are priceless."

The Gospel, she argues, demands that Christians speak up. "The purpose of the Christian Gospel has always been to set captives free; and that's why Christianity has — and will continue to — weigh in on the prostitution debate," Paddey wrote in a column at NationalPost.com, a Canadian news website.

"It is part of the mandate of believers in Christ to speak out for the oppressed. It is an activism that stems not from moral one-upmanship, but from a belief in the beautiful possibility of redemption."

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Becoming One youth camp



2. Calvary Church, Louisville



3. First Church, Jackson



4. Truitt Memorial Church, Pearl

1. A youth camp, **Becoming One**, was held at Beulah Church, Myrtle. The camp was comprised of youth from Martin Church, New Albany; Beulah Church; Faith Church, Hickory Flat; and Old Oak Grove Church, Myrtle. Forty-three students attended the three-day camp, with 24 professions of faith. Shown are the participants.

2. **Calvary Church, Louisville**, was recognized by the North American Mission Board for being the top ranked church in per capita giving in Winston Association for 2009. It was also the top ranked church in per capita giving in the association for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Shown are Carol Moody, pastor Rickey McKay, and Guy Young.

3. The Sonrise men's ensemble, part of Reflections Choir of First Church, Jackson, recently performed at the Twin Lakes Retreat, Florence. The retreat was sponsored by Park Place Church, Flowood. Shown, seated, are Goldie Schimpf, Morris Currie, Charles Carter, Jerry Williams, Doug Harrington, and James Foster; standing, Joe Turner, Lavell Smith, Jim Schimpf, and Ron Stewart.

4. **Truitt Memorial Church, Pearl**, ordained Mike Sermons and Billy Jordan as deacons Sept. 26. Shown are Sermons and Jordan.

5. **Foxworth Church, Foxworth**, honored pastor Charles Nail and his wife, Sonja, during Pastor Appreciation Month Oct. 3 with the presentation of a memory quilt. Shown are the Nails.

6. **First Church, Flora**, ordained Tim Barker and Jeffrey Lewis to the deacon ministry Sept. 26. Shown are Doug Barker, Barker, pastor Joe Cole, Lewis, and Ted Lewis.

7. **Military Church, Sumrall** held Vacation Bible School June 20-25 with an average attendance of 150. Shown are the participants.

8. **Sunrise Church, Petal**, recently conducted a note burning ceremony to celebrate paying off their new building in seven years. Shown are Ken Cobb, Sankie McLeod, Tommy Hinton, Frank Payne, pastor Gerald Buckley, Ed Davis, Sarah Hegwood, and Theron Oveitt.



5. The Nails



6. First Church, Flora



7. Military Church, Sumrall



8. Sunrise Church, Petal

Alabama legislators, others snared in bingo scheme

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — A shock wave spread across Alabama on Oct. 4 when 11 lawmakers, gambling bosses, lobbyists, and others were arrested in a bingo probe and charged with a vote-buying scheme.

Indictments were handed down against 11 individuals who will be arraigned in Montgomery on Oct. 15. Most, if not all, are expected to plead not guilty.

Some are calling the timing an attempt to influence the upcoming general election. Some see the investigation as a final power play by Gov. Bob Riley, who took a heavy hand to electronic bingo this year.

Riley's Task Force on Illegal Gambling succeeded in shutting down the state's three largest slot machine-style facilities, which have been the center of a vicious battle over what type of gambling truly is legal in Alabama.

The bingo investigation, spearheaded by the FBI, became public after Senate Bill 380, sponsored by Sen. Roger Bedford, D-Russellville, passed the state Senate when a few senators switched their votes. Just as the bill seemed to be gaining steam to provide a statewide vote to expand gambling, the investigation was announced.

Several gambling proponents accused Republicans of undermining the legislation with the FBI investigation, because it seemingly killed the bill. The House sponsor of the bill, Rep. Marcel Black, D-Tuscaloosa, pulled his bill before a vote could be taken in the state House of Representatives.

Accusations of a Republican conspiracy have only gotten louder and harsher with the indictments coming out less than a month before the general election on Nov. 2, but authorities deny the charges.

"In a case like this... we just had to go with where the facts and law were, and we had to make the decision at the appropriate time," said Lanny A. Breuer, assistant U.S. attorney general, "and that's 100% what dictated the timing of this case."

While media outlets nationwide covered the probe and newspapers and TV stations statewide provided daily coverage for days after the arrests, most Alabama Baptists were not shocked with the news.

The Alabama Baptist newspaper has covered the gambling issue in the state for more than a decade, and the Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP) has worked for several decades urging legislators to vote against expanding gambling.

"We've suspected the corruption existed all along and have been working to defeat attempts to expand gambling for that reason," said Joe Godfrey, executive director of ALCAP. "I spend countless hours walking the halls of the statehouse reminding legislators of the evil that comes with this type of business. My predecessor Dan Ireland has warned senators and representatives for more than 30 years about the dangers of getting caught in the gambling web."

Godfrey and Ireland work against scores of high-paid pro-gambling lobbyists, so their job is not easy. "Those lobbyists make it hard for legislators to resist

their offers," Godfrey said, "but we try to stay consistent with our message."

As far as what lies ahead, Godfrey said he could not predict. "I still believe in the justice system and being innocent until proven guilty as far as the individuals who are involved, but what this does prove is that gambling breeds corruption," he said.

"These recent indictments and arrests should cause everyone to ask, 'Do we really want this kind of corrupting influence in our state?' The more gambling we allow in Alabama, the greater the potential for corruption."

Four legislators were among those indicted:

- Harri Anne H. Smith, 48, of Slocomb. Charged with one count of conspiracy, two counts of federal program bribery, one count of extortion, 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud, and four counts of money laundering.

- James E. Preuett, 75, of Talladega. Charged with one count of conspiracy, one count of federal program bribery, one count of attempted extortion, 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud, and one count of making a false statement.

- Quinton T. Ross Jr., 41, of Montgomery. Charged with one count of conspiracy, two counts of federal program bribery, two counts of attempted extortion and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

- Larry P. Means, 63, of Attalla. Charged with one count of conspiracy, two counts of federal program bribery, two counts of attempted

extortion, and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

Also indicted were:

- Milton E. McGregor, 71, of Montgomery. Charged with one count of conspiracy, six counts of federal program bribery, and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

- Ronald E. Gilley, 45, of Enterprise. Charged with one count of conspiracy, six counts of federal program bribery, 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud, and four counts of money laundering.

- Jarrod D. Massey, 39, of Montgomery. Charged with one count of conspiracy, five counts of federal program bribery, and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

- Thomas E. Coker, 70, of Lowndesboro. Charged with one count of conspiracy, two counts of federal program bribery, and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

- Robert B. Geddie Jr., 60, of Montgomery. Charged with one count of conspiracy, one count of federal program bribery, 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud, and one count of obstruction of justice.

- Jarrell W. Walker Jr., 36, of Lanett. Charged with one count of conspiracy, one count of federal program bribery, and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

- Joseph R. Crosby, 61, of Montgomery. Charged with one count of conspiracy, one count of federal program bribery and 11 counts of honest services mail and wire fraud.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. **First Church, Clara**, will hold its annual Autumn Celebration with funds raised going toward the Southern Baptist World Hunger Relief Fund Oct. 24, beginning at 4 p.m. Included are sports-related games, food, and a silent auction. For more information, call (601) 735-2176. Richard Bradley, pastor.
2. **Bethel Church, Bogue Chitto**, will have a Senior Citizen's Day Oct. 31. Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish meal and Dogwood Cross. Jason Case, speaker; Damon Williamson, pastor.
3. **Ethel Church, Ethel**, is selling cookbooks, hardback with 834 recipes. Send \$25 to Cookbook, 2805 Attala Rd. 5217, Ethel, MS 39067.
4. **Rock Hill Church, Mt. Olive**, will have a new dedication service Oct. 24, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds. Tommy King, speaker; Nelson Crozier, pastor.
5. **Holly Church, Alcorn** recently recognized Barbara Smith for 28 years of service as church clerk. She was presented a plaque by the church Sept. 19. John Boler, pastor.

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CORRECTION

In previous editions of The Baptist Record, the new president of the North American Mission Board was alternately identified as Kevin Ezell and Keith Ezell. His correct name is Kevin Ezell. The Baptist Record regrets the error.



COLLEGE NEWS

1. **Mississippi College** will hold homecoming activities Oct. 14 - 16, including a golf tournament, a Choctaws football game, an awards dinner, a parade along College Street, and much more. This year's theme is MC: The Legacy Continues. For a complete schedule of MC's homecoming events - from alumni reunions to department receptions and 50-Year-Club gatherings - visit the college's web site at www.alumni.mc.edu/homecoming or call (866) 232-3945 or (601) 925-3252.
2. **Mississippi College** is hosting a homecoming reception for Sam Gore Oct. 16, 10 a.m., at the Gore Galleries on the Clinton campus. For more information, call (601) 925-3880 or 925-7770.
3. **Blue Mountain College** is hosting a ministerial alumni banquet during the Mississippi Baptist Convention Oct. 26, 5 p.m., at Galloway Methodist Church, Jackson. Tickets, \$12.50, available at the BMC exhibit at First Church, Jackson.

MS POSITIONS

THE MUSIC SEARCH COMMITTEE of Star Baptist Church is now accepting resumes for a Full-time Worship Leader/Associate Minister. Please send resumes to starbaptistresumes@gmail.com

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

The Case for Jesus: What's So Different About Jesus?

John 6:66-69; 9:17, 24-25, 31-33, 35-38; 20:27-29

By Rick Henson

Jesus was like Mohammed, Buddha, Confucius, Bahá'u'llah, and Joseph Smith in that He died as did they. The similarities ended there. Unlike other world religious leaders, Jesus Christ rose from the dead. In Jerusalem there exists an empty tomb, where Jesus stayed only until the third day after His crucifixion. Unlike other world religious leaders, Jesus Christ was without sin. Even Roman Prefect Pontius Pilate found no reason to condemn Jesus. Unlike other world religious leaders, Jesus existed before His birth, which was foretold in the Old Testament Scriptures.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke utilized a similar outline and were written within a few decades of Christ's ascension into heaven. These



Henson

three gospel accounts were based on eyewitness accounts of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. The Gospel of John, however, was written with a different outline.

John, one of the original twelve Apostles, outlived all his contemporaries. He lived over ninety years and wrote His account much later than the other three. He used seven signs to show the deity of Christ. While Jesus performed many more miracles, John selected seven to show that Jesus was God, and not just another religious leader.

The First Sign in the second chapter of John records how Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. By this sign Jesus demonstrated that He was the Lord of Creation.

The Second Sign in the fourth chapter of John describes how Jesus healed

the dying son of a nobleman, just by speaking. Jesus did not go to the boy; He just said that he was healed, and it happened. This sign demonstrated that Jesus was not limited as humans by sight and distance.

The Third Sign in the fifth chapter of John occurred in Jerusalem at the Pool of Bethesda, or "House of Mercy" in Hebrew. Jesus healed a man who had been crippled for thirty-eight years. He proved He was Lord over adversity and time.

In the Fourth Sign in John chapter six, Jesus multiplied five loaves of bread and two fish and fed over five thousand men, plus their wives, sons, and daughters. Jesus demonstrated that He was the Lord of all sufficiency, and was not limited by lack of resources.

Later in the sixth chapter of John, Jesus performed the Fifth Sign by walking on water in the Sea of Galilee. Jesus proved He was Lord of the elements and natural law.

The Sixth Sign occurred in the ninth chapter of John's Gospel as Jesus healed a man born blind. Jesus demonstrated His authority over deformity and misfortune, and that He was not limited by what has happened in the past.

The Seventh Sign is recorded in the eleventh chapter of John, as Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Jesus thus proved that even death answers to Him.

In the twentieth chapter of John, Jesus revealed Himself as far more than a religious leader and teacher, as He rose from the dead. Those who actually saw Jesus Christ recognized that He was God. He claimed to be God and backed up His claim with authority over life and death.

One may visit the graves of religious leaders all over the world. At Al-Masjid al-Nabawi, Muslims visit the Tomb of Mohammed in Medina, Saudi Arabia. You may visit the Tomb of Buddha at Kusinara, India at the foot of the Himalayan Mountains, though one of his teeth is in a temple in Sri Lanka. The remains of Confucius are buried in a cemetery in Qufu,

Shandong Province, China. Bahá'u'llah, the founder of Bahá'i Faith is buried in Bahji, near Acre, Israel. Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church, was buried in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1844, though the location of the grave is in question today. Even the remains of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, who died in 1986, were cremated and his ashes sprinkled into the Pacific Ocean; (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burial_places_of_founders_of_world_religions).

The tomb of Jesus, however, is empty. I have seen it with my own eyes. His empty tomb proves the main difference between Jesus of Nazareth and all these others. All these religious leaders submitted to death, as do all humans (Hebrews 9:27). Jesus did not submit, but defeated death. He overcame the grave, took away its sting, and offers to all who trust in Him a temporary death (John 1:12).

What's so different about Jesus? He is alive.

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Being in Step

Ephesians 4: 1-6

By Melleen Moore

Any member of a marching band or military unit knows being in step is of major importance. The precision drills required concentration on marching in step and keeping lines and formations straight. Paul takes the idea of "being in step" to the next level of being in unity with each other in the church.

Live Up to Your Call

Ephesians 4: 1-6

Paul introduces the idea of the calling of Christ with the word "therefore" connecting it to the doctrine of one body of believers (Jews and Gentiles) from chapters 1-3. He continues to identify himself as a "prisoner of the Lord" as he has done before, saying to believers that persecution may come somewhere along the way. Paul encourages us "to walk worthy" (Ephesians 4: 1,

HCSB) of the calling received as he focuses on the believer's responsibility "in Christ". To "walk worthy" deserves additional thought in that walking is a daily exercise for all of us. For some it is merely getting where we are going and for others, it is an activity for good health. Worthy identifies a desire for a higher standard above the normal. This worthy walk is to be made with special goals of humility, gentleness, patience, love and peace. You will recognize most of these characteristics as fruits of the Spirit recorded in Galatians 5:22. A brief description of each could be humility—lowly as Christ was; gentleness—mild spirit-ed; patience—longsuffering; love—continuous and unconditional forbearance; peace—absence of distrust and disturbance. With these characteris-



Moore

tics, unity of the Spirit can become a reality—an oneness of all believers. Living in one body (the church), one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father makes unity an achievable goal.

What a beautiful thought! Living up to the call of Christ puts "a spring" in the believer's step toward building the church together.

Appreciate Spiritual Gifts

Ephesians 4: 7-12

Paul speaks of the greatest gift of all—grace through Jesus Christ. But wait there is more. It is given to each one of us—we ask and receive. But there is still more, the grace is "according to the measure of the Messiah's gift"—the greatest measure of all. Jesus ascended unto His Father and waits as all believers will join Him. In the text, gifts given are a picture of celebration after a victorious battle. The taking of prisoners into captivity is a scene from the conquering

kings in the Old Testament. Upon returning from a battle victory, the spoils of war were brought as gifts and even prisoners were paraded. Jesus has won the battle over sin and the celebration waits. Jesus said in John 14:3 "And if I will go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself" (NKJV). However, before Jesus could ascend to the Father he had to descend and fulfill the scripture of the prophets. Believers share the gift of grace in the oneness of the church. Jesus provides the gifts of leadership among His church body "for the training of the saints in the work of ministry." (Ephesians 4:12, HCSB). Some gifts were given to apostles those "sent out" by Jesus. Some were prophets speaking with boldness the words of God. Some were evangelist gifted in presenting the gospel of salvation. Some were pastors and teachers to lead the local church. Whatever the gift or gifts of a believer, it is to be used in building the church, the body of Christ.

Work Together

Ephesians 4:13-16

The scripture gives us three pictures of the church working together. The first is of a mature man measured in height by the fullness of Christ. The maturity is seen in unity of faith and knowledge of Jesus. The second picture is small children who are being misguided with unfamiliar truths that deceive their innocent minds. The scripture says "tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching" (Ephesians 4:14, HCSB). The children (could be new believers) should be taught the truth in love to grow more like Jesus. The third picture is of the physical body working together to function properly. The parts work together with the supporting ligaments knitting the individual parts to function as a whole. The church members of the body of Christ are to grow in love and work together in unity with the gifts God has given.

Moore is a member of Macedonia Church, Petal.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

THE BAPTIST
Record

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mcb.org.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

JULY, 2010

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NAMB's Ezell: 'I understand' opposition to election

Part one of a two-part series

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Following is an interview of Kevin Ezell, the new president of Southern Baptists' North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga. The interview was conducted by former Mississippi pastor J. Gerald Harris, currently editor of The Christian Index, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Q: I know you have indicated that looking to what occurred in the past concerning the opposition to your election is "wasted perspiration" and that it's time to move forward, but I think our readers would like to know how you respond to criticism about your comparatively low Cooperative Program and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering giving at Highview [Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., where Ezell has been pastor since 1996].

A: The way I describe this situation is that it's somewhat like a guy who is dating your daughter. He wants to marry her, but you really don't want him to. So, you do everything in your power to keep them from being married, but once they are married you do everything you can to keep them married.

I understand why some have come out against my election. I don't blame them at all and I hope to be friends with them but now that it has happened, the best thing for the Kingdom's sake is that we move forward together and get this done, because that is why I am here — to try to make [NAMB] work better.

What has hurt the most in the process is the insinuation that Highview is not a giving church. I had factory workers, deacons and widows who were such faithful givers. We gave and we gave sacrificially and significantly but just didn't go through the traditional channels.

That is why I want to be here, to give a compelling vision and an effective strategy for the North American Mission Board so people will want to give. At Highview we gave [directly] to church planters in order to be effective stewards, because we realized that through traditional giving channels not enough of the money was getting to where it really needed to go.

Q: The Great Commission Resurgence Task Force spent a lot of time assuring Southern Baptists that the Cooperative Program was the "primary and preferred" method of giving for Southern Baptists, but your church's financial records indicate that the per capita giving is considerably lower than the average church. Do you think your election invalidates that part of the task force recommendations?

A: No, not at all. I think the search committee felt like NAMB needed to find a leader that could pull us out of where we are and take us to where we need to be. People give to a

compelling vision; they don't give to the president of an agency any more than church members give to a pastor.

I may be vulnerable at this point. I didn't do it the traditional way, but my ultimate goal is to get people thinking about the lost. I want to make an indentation upon the lost of North America and we are just not doing it right now.

I am trying to find the plumb line. For example, I want to find out how many churches are being planted and I want to know how they are doing five years later. We have got to have some accurate reporting.

I don't want to write a book and I don't want to start a movement after my name. I just want to get this done. I want to connect with as many state leaders as possible and I hope those state executives will give our relationship a chance. I realize I am starting behind the eight ball because some of these relationships have been strained in the past, but I want us to do it together.

Q: How do you plan to implement the ending of Cooperative Agreements between NAMB and the state conventions? How will the funds you receive be redeployed? Will they all find their ways back to states in different formulations, or will a good portion be directed to local church networks and individual congregations to plant new congregations?

A: I've only been doing this for three weeks. I didn't think they would pick me [for this position] so I don't really have a detailed plan, but this is not an either/or situation; it's a both/and situation.

We want to partner with networks of churches, associations and state conventions and have some quality control mechanisms in place. We want to evaluate things so we won't be sending money to churches that aren't being effective.

I am in the process of trying to develop relationships with the state executive directors and I want to know how to relate better to them. I know some of them don't trust me, and I don't blame them. I just want us to all take a deep breath and give our relationships a chance; I really think it will work.

I want to sit down and listen to all the state execs and hear what they are saying. [I want them to know that] I am committed to working with our state convention leaders to penetrate lostness.

Q: Cooperative Agreements now have a high degree of accountability for how the funds are used for joint funding of missionaries and other ministries. Will you have a system of checks and balances to validate and report back to Southern Baptists tithers?

A: We have 42 state conventions and some great leaders, but I am not sure there is the same level of leadership in all 42 con-

ventions, so there are probably 42 different levels of accountability. We need a national strategy. We want to work with the states to help provide additional accountability, because it is better to have double supervision than no supervision.

We have a Linnie Fenton principle. She was a very poor woman in my first church, [a very small church that] called me as pastor by a seven to zero vote. Linnie did not have much materially but she gave sacrificially. I love small churches and in every church I have served since that first one, we have spent our money like it was Linnie Fenton's money. I have always seen myself as a small church pastor that was stuck in a big church.

We are servants of the Southern Baptist Convention, of the Linnie Fentons of the world.

Q: Giving out millions of dollars to churches in \$50,000 and \$100,000 increments (grants) could recreate the "bloated bureaucracy" when it comes to administrative accountability that many decried SBC agencies for creating in the first place. What are your thoughts on that?

A: I can see where someone might say, "Well, he will just give money to his friends to plant churches." What we would like to do is come up with a regional strategy. There are three primary areas that are underserved: the West, the Northeast, and Canada. We would have regional supervision and they would work in partnership with those states.

We are not looking at a bloated anything. We are looking at putting more missionaries and more church planters out there, and everyone is going to have to legitimize why they are there. If people are serving in the area of evangelism we will want to know how many people are coming to faith in Christ.

I learned to witness when it was called soul winning. When I was in junior high school Bill Whitlow took me door to door in an apartment complex in Paducah [Ky.] and taught me how to be a soul winner. I used the Roman Road. I even passed out those old Chick tracts.

We had a bus ministry and I volunteered to be a captain, because they couldn't find anyone to do a certain route. They would dump me at a Dairy Queen at 9 o'clock on Saturday with a big bag of Double Bubble chewing gum and I would walk around until 1 o'clock, until someone picked me up. My mom and dad would give me \$5 for lunch at the Dairy Queen.

I spent four hours on Saturday morning looking for Big Wheels in driveways, because I knew that I would be able to find kids there. That's how I learned.

We owe it to Southern Baptists to put missionaries on the field that are qualified, doing the work, and serving the churches and the people. If



Ezell

people are serving in the area of evangelism we will want to know how many people are coming to faith in Christ.

Today there are too many people who like to push a pen rather than share their faith. I know it has got to start [at NAMB] and it has got to work its way through every floor of this building. When we meet to pray I not only want to know who needs prayer for healing, I want to know who has led someone to Christ and how we need to pray for new believers.

It will take a while to change the NAMB DNA, but we will do it through attrition, retirement incentives, and infusing some of the right DNA.

Q: What kinds of churches will be started with NAMB funds that are deployed to local congregations? How will you vet each congregation for doctrinal purity? We have noticed it is not unusual for Southern Baptist congregations to put thousands of dollars into a new church plant and within five years or less it has become independent with no relationship to the Southern Baptist lifeline [the Cooperative Program], doctrine or polity. What kinds of safeguards will you have in place to prevent this from occurring?

A: We all know there is no ultimate safeguard. In fact, that is one of the reasons we started doing campuses in Louisville. We wanted to make sure that we stayed evangelistically focused and conservative theologically.

I think with the checks and balances we use and the integrity of the people we put in those churches we will help to safeguard the churches against those things that would militate against an effective ministry.

We need to make sure the churches we plant are aligned

with us, but I go back to that compelling vision. We are beyond the day when people give out of simple brand loyalty. They don't do that anymore. It's a new generation and they love to hear about missions, but they want to do missions.

Q: Continuing that discussion of your missions giving record, you recently said that if more SBC churches followed Highview's model there would be far more churches being planted than are currently being started. If the [Southern Baptist Convention] moved to such a model, do you see NAMB moving away from its historic role as being a missionary sending agency and shifting that role to the local church? Could you eventually see NAMB funneling more resources to church planting networks and exiting its role of recruiting and sending missionaries?

A: Highview never intended to be a model, but regarding the funding of missionaries and church planting efforts, we will need to focus on both. We will continue to send missionaries and amplify the effective efforts of churches, associations, and states. I think we would be remiss to say that everything we have done in the past has been effective. Some people want to say that, but it is just not true. So, we must define reality and not miss this opportunity.

I believe we are standing at the threshold of a golden era of church planting. We have students in our seminaries that have brilliant minds, but many of them are of the opinion that it would be better to raise their own support in church planting than go through the maze of trying to get help from the denomination.